



Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance

U.S. Africa Command Fact Sheet

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Program Overview

The Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program is a U.S. Department of State (DOS) funded and managed initiative designed to improve African militaries' capabilities by providing selected training and equipment required to execute multinational peace support operations. U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) supports the ACOTA program by providing military mentors, trainers, and advisors at the request of the State Department.

Objectives

ACOTA provides a full range of peacekeeping training and instruction tailored to match a country's needs and capabilities. The program focuses on sub-Saharan African soldiers from partner nations who are scheduled to participate in a peace support operation or who are designated to be in a standby mode to do so.

Benefits

ACOTA benefits its partners by: training African soldiers on topics including convoy escort procedures, refugee management, and small-unit command skills; overseeing exercises for battalion, brigade, and multinational force headquarters personnel; providing equipment to partner nations, including mine detectors, field medical equipment, uniforms, and water purification devices; conducting refresher training periodically to ensure that trained units maintain their capabilities; and training African trainers who in turn train their own nation's soldiers in peacekeeping skills.

Facts and Figures

Since 1997, the U.S. has provided training and non-lethal equipment to more than 215,000 peacekeepers from African partner militaries in 238 contingent units. ACOTA's 25 partners include Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda and Zambia. These partners have sent peacekeeping contingents to varied missions such as Sudan (AMIS, UNAMID, UNMIS and UNMISS), Sierra Leone (ECOWAS and UNAMSL), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC/MONUSCO), Guinea-Bissau, the Central African Republic (MISAB, MINURCA, MICOPAX, and MINURCAT), Ethiopia-Eritrea (UNMEE), Cote d'Ivoire

(ECOWAS and UNOCI), Liberia (ECOWAS and UNMIL), Burundi (OMIB and ONUB), Kosovo (UNMIK), Lebanon (UNIFIL), Somalia (AMISOM), Chad (MINURCAT II), and humanitarian relief efforts in Mozambique.

Impact

ACOTA facilitates the deployments of roughly 20 African battalions annually and helps them build peacekeeping training capacity. The importance of this program is evident in its wide acceptance from its 25 participating nations, its ongoing support by the U.S. State Department, and by the budgetary increases it has received from the U.S. Congress over the years.

Common Q&A

What is the difference between ACOTA and GPOI (Global Peace Operations Initiative)? ACOTA predates GPOI, though it was subsumed under GPOI, the overarching program, while ACOTA is a mechanism managed by DOS Bureau of African Affairs for implementing GPOI efforts.

Why was the program started? The African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI), and then ACOTA, developed in response to crisis events in Africa in the 1990s, including conflict in Somalia, the genocide in Rwanda, and the crisis in Burundi.

How much funding has U.S. Africa Command spent on ACOTA? ACOTA is managed entirely by the DOS. U.S. AFRICOM spends GPOI funds in support of ACOTA efforts.

What are the conditions for ACOTA partnership? There are five conditions. The requesting nation must be serving under an elected civilian government, it cannot have a record of human rights abuses, it must express interest in deploying peacekeepers, it must have the potential capacity to deploy peacekeepers, and it must sign Section 505 of the Foreign Assistance Act.

Other Sources

[The Global Peace Operations Initiative \(U.S. Department of State\)](#)

[ACOTA \(U.S. Department of State\)](#)

[U.S. Army Africa ACOTA team trains Sierra Leone troops](#)

